



Glenda Ritz, NBCT
Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

Frequently Asked Questions about Kindergarten Programs

In Indiana, a school corporation is required to provide a kindergarten program for eligible students. Although providing a half-day kindergarten program satisfies this requirement, a school corporation may provide a full-day kindergarten program as an alternative or in addition to a separate half-day kindergarten program. Additional funding for providing a full-day kindergarten program is available through a Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) Grant.

The following frequently asked question regarding the provision of kindergarten programs.

1. At what age may a child enroll in kindergarten?

A child may enter kindergarten if the child is at least five years of age on or before August 1 of the school year. The local school corporation must, however, have a procedure that allows a parent to appeal the minimum age requirement to the local school superintendent.

2. Does a child have to be tested in order to enroll in kindergarten?

No. If the child meets the minimum age requirement, the child may enroll in kindergarten.

3. Is a child required to have a social security number to enroll in kindergarten?

No. It is unlawful for a school to deny enrollment to a child or deny any educational benefit because the parent refuses to disclose the child's social security number. A school may ask a parent to voluntarily provide the child's social security number. However, in doing so, the Privacy Act of 1974 requires that the school also tell parents that they are not required to provide the number. The school must also tell the parent how the school will use the child's social security number.

4. Is documentation of residency within the school corporation required to enroll in kindergarten?

No. Parents may enroll their child in the school corporation within whose boundaries the parents reside. School may reasonable ask for documentation that establishes the parent's residence. Because parent may not have this information if they are homeless or living with a relative, schools must enroll children presented for enrollment. A school official then may verify legal settlement.

5. Once a child is enrolled in kindergarten, is the child subject to the same attendance requirements as any other student?

Yes. If a child enrolls in kindergarten, the child is subject to the same "compulsory attendance" requirement as any other student in the school. Compulsory attendance means that the child is required to attend school during the days and hours determined by the school corporation. If a child enrolls in a full-day kindergarten program, attendance for the full day is required; the parent may not opt to have the child attend for only a half day of a full-day kindergarten program.



Glenda Ritz, NBCT

Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

- 6. When a child transfers from an out-of-state or a private kindergarten program and does not meet the Indiana age-eligibility requirement, should the school accept that child into the kindergarten program?**

If the child does not meet the minimum age requirement for enrollment in kindergarten in the school corporation, the school is not required to enroll the child in kindergarten. However, the parent may appeal the requirement to the superintendent in accordance with the procedures adopted by the school corporation.

- 7. If a child is old enough to attend kindergarten, can a parent hold the child out of school for a year?**

A child is not required to attend school until the school year in which the child becomes seven years old.

- 8. Because attending kindergarten is not mandatory, can I hold my child out until the child reaches the age of seven and enroll directly into first grade?**

If a child enrolls in school but has not attended kindergarten, the superintendent determines whether the child will enroll in kindergarten or in first grade. The superintendent must make the determination based on the model assessment adopted by the school board.

- 9. Is the school corporation required to provide both a half-day and full-day kindergarten program?**

No. A school corporation is required to provide a kindergarten program. A school corporation may satisfy this requirement by providing a half-day kindergarten program, full-day kindergarten program, or both a half-day and a full-day kindergarten program.

- 10. May a school corporation offer a full-day kindergarten program in only some of its schools?**

Yes. Because a school corporation is not required to provide a full-day kindergarten program, it may choose to offer such program in some, but not all, of its schools. The school corporation satisfies the state requirement as long as it makes a half-day kindergarten program available to all eligible students.

- 11. May a school corporation require the parent to pay a fee for enrolling a child in a full-day kindergarten program?**

No. In accordance to state law enacted in 2013, school corporations may not charge for enrolling or attending a full-day kindergarten. School corporations may charge a supply fee for children enrolling in kindergarten.

12. May a school corporation use state and local general fund to pay for non-Title I student participation in a full-day kindergarten program?

Yes. The school corporation may use any funds otherwise allowable under state and federal law, including the school corporation's general fund to provide full-day kindergarten programs. A school corporation that chooses to use Title I funds, however, may only use Title I funds in their school district to supplement funding in a very specific manner. School administrators should contact their Title I Specialist and are encourage to visit <http://www.doe.in.gov/kindergarten> to review the General Guidance for Funding FDK Programs document.

13. What does the full-day kindergarten program offer that a half-day kindergarten program does not offer?

A full-day kindergarten program may provide additional instruction in or exposure to the curriculum or subject area that is introduced as part of the kindergarten curriculum requirements. The school must provide a kindergarten curriculum in accordance with 511 IAC 6.1-5-1, as well as meet the academic standards and other applicable requirements, in both the half-day and full-day programs. If the school provides both ha-day and full-day program options, the second half of the full-day program may include activities or instruction that supplement the required curriculum.

14. What is the minimum daily instructional time for kindergarten?

A full-day kindergarten program must provide at least five hours of instructional time. A half-day kindergarten program is expected to provide at least two and one-half hours of instructional time.

15. Is there a maximum class size or child to teacher ratio for kindergarten?

No.

16. What is the minimum square footage per child per kindergarten classroom?

The State Department of Health requires a school to provide at least 30 square feet of classroom area per child. The ceiling heights may not be less the 7 ½ feet. Kindergarten classrooms must be part of the first story, above grade, unless the school has an adequate sprinkler system.

17. Can a school corporation take an instructional day to register new kindergarten students for the upcoming school year?

Schools are required to conduct 180 student instructional days a year. Schools can take a day without instruction to register new kindergarten students, but that day does not count toward the 180-day requirement.